



## T.I.N. News Update, 17th November 1989

### CHINA DENIES NEPALI TIBETANS RIGHT TO TRAVEL

A number of foreigners are believed to be trapped in Tibet as a result of the refusal of the Chinese authorities to grant them exit permits.

Since the suppression of the pro-democracy movement in early June China has demanded that all Chinese citizens show a new type of exit permit before they will be allowed to leave China. This rule is also applied to Nepali citizens visiting Tibet, most of whom are Tibetan exiles who have Nepali citizenship.

Since March, when martial law was imposed in the Tibetan capital, many Nepali Tibetans visiting Lhasa have been refused the exit permits which will allow them to leave the country. Reasons for refusal have not been given, and the applicants in Lhasa are told to re-apply every few days for unspecified administrative reasons.

In the last two weeks messages have been received in Kathmandu from Nepali Tibetans in Lhasa who have been trying to get permission to leave Tibet for over six months. The Nepali Government, currently involved in developing closer links with China, has not so far responded to demands for action from Tibetan exiles in Nepal whose relatives are trapped in Tibet.

A small number of Nepali Tibetans have been allowed to travel across the Nepali-Tibetan border at Khasa without hindrance. All are said to have high-level links with the Chinese authorities.

Since the military crackdown in Lhasa no Tibetans travelling on Chinese papers are known to have been allowed to travel to Nepal, except for a small number whose exit permits were issued before the March crackdown. But in the last eight months at least 200 Tibetans have escaped across the Himalayas, avoiding interception by Chinese patrols.

Legal note: The freedom of persons to leave any country is guaranteed in international law. This is specified in Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration is not binding on states and China has not acceded to the Covenant, but these articles have been claimed, referred to and relied upon by states and courts in recent years to such an extent that leading commentators on international law, including Plender, say it is now indisputable that the right to travel exists in customary law. It is therefore binding even on states who are not signatories of the relevant instruments.

China has in any case acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which specifies in Art.5(d)(ii) that all persons are entitled to the freedom to travel, irrespective of race. There are no comparable reports of other nationals or ethnic groups being denied their right to travel by the Chinese authorities. This suggests that if Tibetans are being denied this freedom, whether or not they are citizens of Nepal, China is contravening its legal obligations under the Convention. Last December Beijing announced for the first time that it accepted interventions by foreign countries on issues of racial discrimination (as opposed to issues involving the treatment of ethnic minorities).

The right to travel can be withheld in certain circumstances, e.g., where a country can show a threat to national security or public order, outstanding criminal charges, the non-payment of a

T.I.N. - AN INDEPENDENT INFORMATION SERVICE

TIN UK - ph: +44 (0)171 814 9011 fax: +44 (0)171 814 9015 Administration email: tinadmin@gn.apc.org News email: tin@gn.apc.org

TIN USA - ph/fax +1 (0)307 733 4670 email: tinusa@wyoming.com

Registered address: 7a Southwood Hall, Muswell Hill Rd, London N6 5UF

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debt, tax, or repatriation charge, the repayment of education costs to a third world country, or the need to protect a minor. None of these are known to apply to the present case. There is no specified time by which a country must complete administrative procedures to allow travel, but the time taken must be "reasonable".

## **DEMONSTRATIONS AND ARRESTS CONTINUE**

### **September 22nd Demonstration: 6 women sentenced**

On September 22nd a group of nuns, believed to be from Shangsep Nunnery, staged a demonstration in the Barkhor, and were immediately arrested. On October 4th the authorities announced that six of the women had been sentenced without trial to three years hard labour.

Technically referred to as "reform through labour", this is the maximum sentence available to Chinese police and administrators who want to imprison people without going through the formality of a trial. Administrative detention allows the Chinese to process cases speedily, and was first used publicly in Lhasa for five nuns whose demonstration interrupted officially-sanctioned ceremonies at the Norbulingka on September 2nd.

### **September 27th Demonstrations**

A number of unconfirmed reports say that many Tibetans tried to stage demonstrations on September 27th despite increased troop presence in the city. A group of up to 500 several hundred is said to have gathered near the Barkhor in order to chant slogans on that day. The crowd dispersed when plainclothes police started to take photographs of participants.

There was also an attempt to hold a mass chanting of the Mani mantra in the Barkhor but, after the arrival of security forces, people left to continue the ceremony in the safety of their own homes. Other reports said that as a gesture of support market traders closed their stalls on that day.

September 27th was the second anniversary of a 1987 demonstration in Lhasa when 21 Tibetans calling for independence were arrested and severely beaten. This was the first of the current series of some thirty demonstrations in Lhasa, and the first witnessed by foreigners in Tibet.

### **September 30th Demonstration: 1 man sentenced**

On November 17th the BBC, citing Tibet Daily, reported that 1 monk had been sentenced without trial to 3 years "reform through labour" for shouting pro-independence slogans during a small demonstration in Lhasa on September 30th.

### **October 14th Demonstration: 6 women arrested**

On October 14th, according to eyewitness reports, another group of six nuns staged a demonstration near the Jokhang temple and were immediately arrested. This was later confirmed by official sources, including Tibet Daily which added that the nuns had walked to the Jokhang from their nunnery on the outskirts of the city. It said the nuns, thought to have been marking the award of the Nobel peace Prize to the Dalai Lama, had chanted slogans calling for Tibetan independence, and accused them of "counter-revolutionary crimes". This is the most serious category of charges available under Chinese law.

### **Late October Demonstration: 4 men sentenced, 1 sent for trial**

In the Tibet Daily article cited by the BBC on November 17th announced that four other monks had also been sentenced to 3 years in a labour reform camp. They had also been accused of taking part in a small pro-independence demonstration in Lhasa which was described as happening "in late October". One other man had been identified as a ringleader and had been formerly arrested, indicating that he is likely to receive both a trial and a more severe sentence from the judicial authorities.

## PEACE PRIZE: CELEBRATIONS THROUGHOUT TIBET

There was widespread response in Tibet to the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama on October 5th. The demonstrators used traditional cultural and religious symbols to display their feelings, and so avoided otherwise certain police retaliation.

On the evening of October 11th up to one thousand people are believed to have been present in the Barkhor, where throughout the day many had performed rituals indicating special celebrations. Many burnt juniper branches in the incense burners in front of the Jokhang Temple, so that at times the front of the temple was almost invisible in the dense clouds of smoke.

Photographs show the ground covered with hundreds of lungta', (literally, windhorses) prayers printed on small squares of paper designed to float in the wind. Others show Tibetans throwing handfuls of tsampa (roasted barley flour) into the air - a rite usually associated with celebrations of the Dalai Lama's birthday.

Protestors avoided police attention by continuing the normal daily ritual of walking round the temple.

On the night of the October 11th a number of trucks full of security forces arrived in the Jokhang Square during the celebrations. They continued to monitor the situation but did not intervene. Throughout the day police and military patrols continued to march and jog through the crowds and at least one tourist had his film confiscated after taking pictures of the celebrations.

On the next day up to 400 people are reported to have lit incense in the Barkhor before proceeding 3 km to the Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama's former Summer Palace from which he fled Tibet in 1959. The gates of the palace were closed, and many of the celebrants tied khatas, traditional Tibetan greetings scarves, to the gates of the Palace as signs of respect to the exiled leader. Some blew conch shells outside the gates of the Norbulingka. The blowing of conch shells is a religious ritual associated with victory and auspicious beginnings.

### "Riots" in Eastern Tibet

The Hong Kong magazine Ming Pao in its report of October 23rd added that major protests had taken place in Ngaba, 1500 km miles west of Lhasa, as Tibetans responded to news of the award. It described the incidents as "large-scale riots".

It attributed the information to "a reliable source" and went on to say that two heads of the Tibetan section of the United Front Department and the State Nationalities Affairs Commission had been sent to Ngaba to handle the matter. It added that as a result of the Nobel Peace Prize Award the authorities "have decided to tighten control over the Tibetan regions."

This is the first press report of political activity in Ngaba, a town in Amdo not far from the historic Sino-Tibetan border. Since the Chinese invasion Ngapa has been annexed to the South-Western Chinese province of Sichuan. It is not open to tourists, but unofficial visitors who visited there in July reported that pro-independence posters were in evidence.

### New Protest Strategies

The Lhasa celebrations are the latest in a series of protest strategies developed by Tibetans which bypass current Chinese regulations outlawing political expression. These strategies, avoiding the use of directly political symbols such as the Tibetan flag, appear to confuse the security forces and deny them opportunities for intervention.

Although explicitly political demonstrations lead to immediate arrest, Chinese officials are reluctant to intervene during religious or cultural ceremonies, fearing uncontrollable backlash.

Since 1980 the Chinese they have tried to use carefully controlled religious ceremonies in Tibet as displays of their liberal policies and of Tibetan contentment. This policy backfired badly in

March 1988 when they attempted to force hundreds of monks to attend the Monlam or Great Prayer Ceremony in Lhasa, leading to 36 hours of street demonstrations and up to thirty deaths.

### **Chinese Response to the Award**

News of the award is believed to have reached many Tibetans through official Chinese channels. The People's Daily, the main mouthpiece for the Chinese Government, on 10th October carried strident attacks on the Norwegian Government for tolerating the award. Four days earlier Xinhua, the official Chinese News Agency, said the award constituted interference in China's internal affairs and "seriously hurt the feelings of the people of China".

The Chinese appear to be particularly angered by the wording of the Peace Prize Committee citation, which referred to the Dalai Lama's peaceful "struggle for the liberation of Tibet". The Committee was also careful to describe the Dalai Lama as the religious and political leader of the Tibetan people. Governments anxious to placate China - noticeably the British and the Indians - go to considerable lengths to describe the Dalai Lama only as a religious figure.

On this occasion the official media in Tibet refrained from personal attacks on the Dalai Lama, but some sources in Beijing reported that Chinese media there referred to him as a "gangster". On 10th October Radio Beijing quoted China's Ambassador in Norway as directly accusing the Dalai Lama of creating disturbances in Tibet, describing him as a "political fugitive".

Officials in Lhasa, however, were careful to blame the protests was on the "Dalai Clique" rather on than the leader himself. At a meeting of the T.A.R. Party Committee on 12th October, the day after celebrations began in the Barkhor, officials came together in order "to furiously denounce the award". They accused the Dalai Lama of undermining the national unity of China but did not accuse him of organising unrest in Tibet. The meeting would have been aware that it was strident press attacks on the Tibetan leader, following the presentation of his Five Point Peace Plan in Washington, which led to widespread unrest in Tibet in September 1987.

According to a report on Radio Beijing the meeting was attended by "patriots of the upper strata in Lhasa". This indicates that Beijing, through its United Front Department, is continuing its policy of co-opting the traditional Tibetan aristocracy in its battle to control the region.

### **TIBETAN FACES DEATH SENTENCE FOR PRINTING LEAFLETS**

A 45 year old Tibetan is believed to be facing the death sentence in a special prison in Lhasa. Tseten Norgye was arrested six months ago after police discovered in his room a mimeograph machine allegedly used for printing dissident leaflets.

Three separate sources in Tibet have said that they believe the authorities plan to single him out for execution. Their fears are supported by the fact that he is being held in the prison of Chakpoori, close to the Potala Palace.

Although its precise role is a mystery, it is clear that this detention centre is reserved for exceptional cases. The only other people known to have been held there recently are a number of nuns who had staged demonstrations in Lhasa, some of who were reported in July to have been badly scarred by knife cuts to the breast during imprisonment.

Tseten Norgye is also reported to have been severely injured during interrogation, and is said to have lost the use of one eye since being held in the prison. The authorities have not allowed any friends or relatives to visit him, and have announced no intention to bring charges against him or to hold a trial.

Tseten Norgye, who comes from the town of Gyantse, 250 kilometres south of Lhasa, was imprisoned for over 15 years for alleged political activities before 1979. Since his release in the early 1980's he has worked as a supervisor and book-keeper at the Banakshol, a low-budget



hotel used by Western tourists until individual foreign travellers were banned from Lhasa in March this year. Many of them knew him as a thin and slightly frail man who suffered from bronchial problems, although few knew his political views since he did not speak English and is in any case reserved by nature.

It is known that Tseten did not take part in any of the recent demonstrations in Lhasa. But Chinese officials often treat certain non-violent offenders as exceptional cases. In the past the most severe punishment has been reserved not for violent activists but those seen as opinion-formers and ideologists. This policy has been modified recently in China itself, now that the level of international scrutiny is high, but in Tibet exemplary treatment is still reserved for those involved in writing dissident material or providing intellectual criticism of Chinese claims.

Prominent cases singled out for severe punishment in the last two years have also involved older men with little or no involvement in demonstrations. Geshe Lobsang Wangchuk, a famous writer and historian, died in his seventies in late 1987 after many years in prison; Yulu Dawa Tsering, a 53 year old former lecturer in philosophy, was sentenced in January this year to 10 years for talking to a foreigner. In September this year Tseten Ngodrup, aged 57, received a 12 year sentence for encouraging young people to sing protest songs.

#### CHINESE ADMIT OVER 400 JAILED, 80 SENTENCED IN LHASA

According to a BBC report on October 22nd Chinese officials admitted that week that over 400 (four hundred) Tibetans had been arrested following pro-independence demonstrations in Lhasa this March. 63 (sixty three) of these people had been tried and sentenced, and about twenty nuns had been sent to labour camps without trial for up to three years.

The official, Wang Naiwen, spokesman for the Tibet regional Public Security Bureau, had told Reuters correspondent Guy Dinmore in Lhasa that 320 (three hundred and twenty) people had been released. Mr Dinmore is the first foreign journalist to be allowed to visit Tibet since all foreign travellers and journalists were expelled on March 9th this year. Some journalists have reached Lhasa unofficially, disguised as members of the tourist groups allowed to visit Tibet since mid-June.

Until now the Chinese have admitted only to the sentencing of twenty men and eleven nuns since March this year. The revelations this week confirm that the Chinese are in effect carrying out trials in secret, a practice forbidden by the Chinese Constitution. Unofficial sources estimate arrests in Lhasa alone at well over 1,000, and the Chinese themselves admitted that 300 had already been detained by the end of March.

The official also told the British journalist that he was "absolutely sure" that no prisoners had been beaten or tortured. He also claimed that no-one had been executed or sentenced to life imprisonment since the current unrest in Tibet began two years ago.

This remark runs counter to earlier Chinese statements. Xinhua, the official Chinese news agency, announced on 13th September that a 22-year old Tibetan, named only as Pasang, was sentenced the day before to life imprisonment for involvement in the March demonstrations. On January 19th Sonam Wangdu, aged 36, is known to have received a life sentence, allegedly for involvement in the death of a policeman during the March 5th demonstrations in 1988.

Mr. Dinmore, who was himself detained and threatened at gunpoint by Chinese police during the March demonstrations, said he was "closely chaperoned" by a government official throughout his trip to Lhasa, and that open conversations with local people were almost impossible.

Several Tibetans, including one described only as a "prominent intellectual", did manage to communicate to him their wish for an end to the military occupation. The journalist also met three Tibetans in secret who had been released from prison and who alleged that prison guards

regularly beat inmates and sometimes used torture. Two of the Tibetans bore vicious scars which they said had been inflicted in prison.

He was told that foreigners were not allowed to visit Tibetan prisons, and noted that security in Lhasa was still tight, with hundreds of soldiers manning checkpoints every few hundred yards along main roads in the city.

#### CHINESE DEVELOP NEW TORTURE TECHNIQUES IN LHASA

A detailed eyewitness report from Lhasa indicates that prison officers in Lhasa are continuing the systematic use of torture on political detainees. Reliable information was received about one Tibetan woman, a student at the university in Lhasa, who suffered severe injuries during detention in September and had to be moved to hospital in Lhasa for medical treatment. She had been imprisoned for three years for writing a political manifesto or leaflet critical of Government policies.

One of Britain's senior China-watchers, John Gittings, who visited Lhasa in September, wrote a major report on November 8th in The Guardian on the arrest and torture of women protestors in Tibet. He noted that in this case the girl's medical costs would have to be borne by her family, and that once she recovered from the injuries she would be returned to prison.

Reports from Lhasa indicate that officials are using a new technique to extract confessions from prisoners, involving placing an iron rod or band in the prisoner's mouth and then tying it to his or her arms, tied high up behind the back. According to the report, which is not yet confirmed, the weight of the arms eventually pulls on the mouth until the victim collapses on the ground. Once collapsed, prisoners are constantly revived by being doused with cold water.

Tom Aston, a British reporter who visited Lhasa in October, confirmed the development of new torture techniques in Tibet. In an interview with one of the 200 Tibetans who have fled to Nepal since March he reported that a new type of electric baton was in use in Lhasa prisons. The new batons have four prongs instead of two as in previous models. According to the escapee, a 14 year old Tibetan boy named Tsering, the new devices leave a scar.

Tsering was arrested during demonstrations on March 5th 1989 and held for over a month with four other prisoners in a cell in Prison No.5, five miles north-east of Lhasa. He confirmed earlier reports that daily food rations consisted of two bowls of plain dumplings in thin soup, and went on to refer to describe another previously unknown interrogation mechanism. He said this was a wooden vice fixed to the knees and then made tighter and tighter until the victim confessed.

#### MARTIAL LAW SET TO CONTINUE IN LHASA

Recent official reports from China insist that troops are required to remain in Lhasa "for the foreseeable future" because of recurrent incidents staged by nationalists.

On October 19th Colonel Feng Lanqun, Secretary-General of the Martial Law Command in Lhasa, told Reuters reporter Guy Dinmore that his troops were preparing to spend the winter in Lhasa.

"For the time being, we cannot withdraw," said the Colonel, blaming continuing nationalist activity in the capital which he said included staging demonstrations, putting up posters, waving the Tibetan flag and shouting slogans. "Factors contributing to unrest still exist. So, for the present we cannot lift martial law," he said.

He went on to blame the unrest on the "Dalai Lama Clique", accusing them of sending agitators into Tibet to stir up unrest.

But the officer insisted that in Lhasa "social order had been guaranteed" and that "generally" the situation was "normal and peaceful". He also stressed that all decisions rested with China's leaders in Beijing.

#### **Demonstrations used to justify repression**

Any incidents, however small, are now being used by the authorities to justify the suspension of law and order in the capital. The fact that martial law would need to continue for the foreseeable future was repeated when Tibet Daily on October 14th announced the arrest of six nuns who had staged a demonstration in the Barkhor.

On October 23rd a Hong Kong magazine reported that there had been "riots" in Tibet when news reached there of the October 5th award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama. In its report the unofficial but informed Hong Kong magazine, Ming Bao, said that the incidents meant that there would be no end to martial law "in the foreseeable future".

Detailed reports from Lhasa have made it clear that the incidents there were mainly widespread celebrations rather than riots or demonstrations. The description by Chinese sources of these incidents as riots indicates a continuing need on the part of Beijing to justify the 8-month presence of the army in Lhasa, as well as the exclusion of all but a few foreigners from Tibet.

#### **Martial law in Beijing and Lhasa**

In September the Chinese announced that martial law in Beijing, in force since May 20th, would be gradually scaled down and soldiers on the streets largely replaced by police. This announcement came shortly before two unofficial bridge-mending attempts by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger. Both of the former U.S. officials have recently repeated cold-war arguments that a break in Sino-American relations would encourage Beijing's alliance with Moscow.

There has been no such lessening of control in Lhasa, although officials there have insisted that troops do not conduct house to house arrests. These, according to Colonel Feng, are left to the police.

The term "police" in China includes reference to the People's Armed Police (Wu Jing in Chinese), a militia formed from PLA units in 1984 to relieve the army of certain domestic duties. In uniform the P.A.P. are distinguishable from Police Security Officers only by the insignia of crossed rifles on the shoulders; the P.L.A. also sport single-issue green uniforms but usually with a red stripe rather than a yellow stripe on the trousers or on the collar.

Reports from Lhasa indicate no change in conditions there, confirming that passes have to be shown at army checkpoints at major road junctions. Each Tibetan has to have three different identity cards, each issued by different authorities, in order to be sure of passing all checkpoints within the city. Travel to Nepal is still almost totally forbidden to Tibetans, and foreign tourists are not allowed to move about without a guide.

#### **INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT SPREADS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE - OFFICIAL**

The Chinese authorities have made a tacit admission for the first time that the pro-independence movement in Tibet has spread to the countryside.

Hu Jintao, party leader in the Tibet Autonomous Region, made the admission whilst on an inspection tour in the Nagqu region 300 km north of Lhasa. According to a Lhasa Radio broadcast on September 11th, he warned local cadres that Tibetan nationalists would not give up their struggle at any cost.

In a highly significant concession he went on to say that "separatists...will try at all times to extend their separatist activities to the farming and pastoral areas."

Observers in London commented that the remark almost certainly indicates that nationalist activity has already emerged in rural areas of Tibet.

This is the first indication by the Chinese authorities of the existence of rural dissent. It confirms information received by unofficial sources over the last two years. These have included reports of pro-independence posters being put up in many towns including Drangmo, (Southern Tibet) Ngaba, Rigung, and Labrang (Eastern Tibet), as well as unconfirmed accounts of demonstrations in other towns.

This is the fourth change in position by the Chinese authorities, who have used a succession of statements to explain Tibetan unrest since the current series of demonstrations began two years ago.

Until March this year they repeatedly defined the unrest in Tibet as involving "only a tiny minority". This position became untenable in March of this year, when up to 30,000 troops were moved into the city to deal with this allegedly minute number of unarmed protesters.

Since March they have been maintaining that nationalist unrest is an urban phenomenon, confined to Lhasa. This theory was developed to justify the imposition of martial law in the Tibetan capital on 8th March. It has frequently been supported by television pictures of smiling peasants welcoming the martial law troops.

More recently the Chinese have gone to great lengths to emphasise that Tibetan nationalism is tenacious and unceasing. This latest alteration in their position appears to be aimed at justifying the continued presence of the army eight months after they were moved into in Lhasa.

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#### CHINESE SPOKESMAN ADMITS POLICE FIRED ON INNOCENT PEOPLE

According to a report in Tibet Daily, on August 27th China's leading Tibetan spokesman, Ngawang Ngapo Jigme, made a formal statement criticising police excesses in Tibet in March. Ngapo, vice-chairman of the standing committee of the National People's Congress, said, "During the riots some policemen failed to obey discipline and prior instructions and opened fire on innocent people".

This is the first criticism of police behaviour by an official since the Panchen Lama died in mysterious circumstances in January this year. He had used his position as China's senior Tibetan official to make similar remarks about earlier police responses to Tibetan unrest.

Ngapo's remark confirms that innocent bystanders have often been amongst those shot during police attempts to suppress demonstrations. The Chinese have always been ready to admit this but they have not described it as an error or even as unfortunate.

Ten days earlier Ngapo had followed more conventional Chinese lines of thought in describing the "turmoil" in Lhasa, insisting that it had nothing to do with either nationalism or human rights.

In an interview with the main Party organ, the People's Daily, on 17th September Ngapo insisted that the unrest in Lhasa was not a nationality problem, nor a religious problem, nor a problem of human rights. Instead he insisted that the unrest was "a criminal act of deliberately splitting the motherland".



This definition, which makes dissent in Tibet a criminal act, allows the Chinese to exempt themselves from international scrutiny and to discard all criticism as interference in their internal affairs. It also renders all dissidents in Tibet liable to charges of counter-revolution, many of which can lead to the death sentence.

Although Ngapo is now the senior Tibetan spokesman for the Chinese establishment, his position has been complicated recently by the emergence of his son as a leading critic of Chinese policies in Tibet. Jigme Ngapo, who is studying in the United States, wrote a seminal article entitled "Behind the Unrest in Tibet" published in the dissident exile journal China Spring in February 1988. He is now Joint Editor of Tibet Forum, the first dissident Chinese language magazine to focus on Tibetan independence and human rights.

#### **WORSHIP OF BUDDHA IS FEUDAL, SUPERSTITIOUS AND POLLUTES SOCIETY SAYS CHINESE NEWSPAPER**

China has started a nationwide campaign against certain traditional religious practices. The move, reminiscent of Cultural Revolution policies, is part of the campaign to eliminate the "six evils". These include pornography, drugs, prostitution, child trading and gambling, all described as "social evils". The sixth evil is described as "using feudal and superstitious beliefs to swindle and harm people." According to Radio Beijing, the commencement of the campaign was announced by the State Council in "a telephone conference" on 13th November.

Although the ban on superstitious practices applies initially to such practices as astrology and palmistry, common throughout China, the inclusion of this item has immediate political implications. It likely to be applied to all religious practices, and may be used by the authorities to legitimise persecution and arrest of political dissidents who have cultural or religious affiliations. People arrested under these charges are much less likely to come to the attention of the Western media than those charged with counter-revolution.

In August this year a religious leader was sentenced to death for what were clearly political offences. The case went unnoticed in the Western press. Li Lianting was accused of "curing diseases and reading scriptures" to attract 130 people to join an organisation called the "Great East Asian Buddhist Society". Announcing the death sentence passed on him, officials said he had "advocated dynastic changes and slandered and abused party leaders under the pretence of reading scriptures".

Last month an article appeared in the Chinese press directly linking buddhism to feudal practices. On 10th October 1989 the Peasant's Daily, published in Beijing, printed a series of stories about the worship of Buddha which it said illustrated "the mental state of contemporary rural youth ... and the lack of cultural life in the rural areas".

The article went to say that "Since these feudal and superstitious activities poison the minds of the masses, adversely affect the healthy growth of our younger generation, pollute the general mood of our society, and impede the building of socialist spiritual civilisation in our rural areas, under no circumstances should we underestimate their seriousness and slacken our vigilance against them".

#### **CHINESE PREMIER TO VISIT TIBET**

On 21st November Premier Li Peng, head of the Chinese Government and member of the Party's Politburo, is due to visit Tibet.

This will be the first known visit by a Chinese Premier to the Region, whose whole history was changed when the reformist Party Secretary Hu Yaobang travelled to Tibet in 1980. His

experience of mass deprivation and poverty led to the introduction of temporary liberalisations in Tibet, since largely reversed.

Last July Security Chief Qiao Shi, one of the five other Politburo members, was the most senior figure to visit Tibet, leaving it with his notorious promise to introduce policies of "merciless repression" if protests continued. This year the only senior figure to visit was Education Minister Li Tieying.

Li Peng, who signed the martial law orders that brought the army into both Lhasa and Beijing, was the prime target of nationwide contempt during pro-democracy demonstrations in China this summer. He is regarded as a puppet of Deng Xiao Ping, as a devotee of the Soviet-style central planning approach to development, and as a beneficiary of nepotism - his father by adoption was former Premier Zhou Enlai.

#### **TIN / News Update / London 16 November**

##### **PRO-CHINESE MPS VISIT TIBET**

Three British Members of Parliament made an unpublicised trip to Tibet last month. The only public comments made by members of the group so far indicate that the trip was designed to improve Beijing's image in the UK.

Robert Adley, a backbench Conservative M.P., described his visit as aimed at countering the "junk" put about by those "associated with the feudalist regime" - presumably a reference to supporters of the Dalai Lama. In an interview with the Daily Telegraph after his return to London on November 2nd, Mr Adley said that Tibet was "a primitive society". He described it as suffering from "a slavish adherence to Buddhism."

He said he had been introduced to a Tibetan farmer who welcomed the introduction of martial law because it had boosted his vegetable sales. The British M.P., head of the British Chinese Parliamentary Group since 1980, admitted that Tibet was poverty-stricken but said that China was pouring money into the region, much as, he claimed, Britain did to Scotland and Wales.

Mr Adley was accompanied on his three day visit by two other Conservative M.P.s, Robert Hicks and Hugh Dykes. It remains unclear whether their visit to Tibet on October 26th -28th was made with the knowledge of the British Government, which has cancelled all high-level links with the Chinese except negotiations over Hong Kong. At least one of the M.P.s is believed to have held unofficial talks with the Chinese at vice-premier level.

According to unconfirmed reports, a British diplomat accompanied the M.P.s on their trip to Lhasa. Another source indicated that a number of military attaches from various Beijing embassies were taken to Lhasa on an unpublicised visit in or around mid-September. Both the British and U.S. Governments have recently insisted that none of their officials have visited Tibet.

Although in earlier years Mr Adley was a vociferous supporter of Taiwan, since 1979 he has campaigned on behalf of the People's Republic. He has shown a particular interest in allegations that serfs were maimed by feudal oppressors in pre-1959 Tibet. Last March he issued a public statement describing the Dalai Lama as "no different..from the Ayatollah Khomeini".

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